

Theory of knowledge prescribed titles

November 2011 and May 2012

Instructions to candidates

Your theory of knowledge essay for examination must be submitted to your teacher for authentication. It must be written on one of the ten titles (questions) provided below. You may choose any title, but are recommended to consult with your teacher. Your essay will be marked according to the assessment criteria published in the *Theory of Knowledge* guide. Remember to centre your essay on knowledge issues and, where appropriate, refer to other parts of your IB programme and to your experiences as a knower. Always justify your statements and provide relevant examples to illustrate your arguments. Pay attention to the implications of your arguments, and remember to consider what can be said against them. If you use external sources, cite them according to a recognized convention.

Note that statements in quotations in these titles are not necessarily authentic: they present a real point of view but may not have been spoken or written by an actual person. It is appropriate to analyse them but it is unnecessary, even unwise, to spend time on researching a context for them.

Examiners mark essays against the title as set. Respond to the title exactly as given; do not alter it in any way.

Your essay must be between 1200 and 1600 words in length.

1. Knowledge is generated through the interaction of critical and creative thinking. Evaluate this statement in two areas of knowledge.
2. Compare and contrast knowledge which can be expressed in words/symbols with knowledge that cannot be expressed in this way. Consider CAS and one or more areas of knowledge.
3. Using history and at least one other area of knowledge, examine the claim that it is possible to attain knowledge despite problems of bias and selection.
4. When should we discard explanations that are intuitively appealing?
5. What is it about theories in the human sciences and natural sciences that makes them convincing?
6. 'It is more important to discover new ways of thinking about what is already known than to discover new data or facts'. To what extent would you agree with this claim?
7. 'The vocabulary we have does more than communicate our knowledge; it shapes what we can know'. Evaluate this claim with reference to different areas of knowledge.
8. Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of using faith as a basis for knowledge in religion and in one area of knowledge from the ToK diagram.
9. As an IB student, how has your learning of literature and science contributed to your understanding of individuals and societies?
10. 'Through different methods of justification, we can reach conclusions in ethics that are as well-supported as those provided in mathematics.' To what extent would you agree?